

Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council Minutes

DATCP, Madison WI

5/03/2006

Attendance:

Voting members: Bruce Allison, Bob Brush, Bob Dahl, Lisa Burban, Matt Duvall, John Gall, Jeff Gorman, Laura Jull, Dave Liska, Heather Mann, Mike Michlig, Logan Nelson, Ken Ottman, Dan Traas, and Joe Wilson.

Ex-officio, non-voting members: Dick Rideout

Non-voting guests: Cindy Casey, Jeff Smoller, Rick Wojciak, Laura Wyatt,

Absent members: Tim Bauknecht, Jeff Edgar, Wayne Glowac, Leif Hubbard, Mike Maddox, Joan Stevens, Mark Weaver, Dick Welch.

Action Items

- The next **meeting of the council has been rescheduled to Tuesday, September 19, 2006**. It will be held in Madison at DATCP.
- Mike Michlig needs **council members** to seek statewide involvement in securing award nominees for the annual conference.
- **Awards committee & DNR staff** will develop a timeline for the awards process.
- **Dave Liska** and **Dick Rideout** will draft a letter to Secretary Hassett and circulate it to council members, advising the DNR to request the Governor vetoes the billboard bills.
- **Council members** should notify their constituencies of their position on the billboard bills.
- **Council members** should notify their constituencies of their position on urban forest federal funding for budget year 2007.
- **Dave Liska** and **Dick Rideout** will draft a letter to Paul Delong and the Forestry Leadership team reemphasizing the need for the SE Regional Urban Forestry Coordinator position.
- **Lisa Burban** will obtain contact information and fee schedules for speakers featured at the Community Tree Leadership Forum.
- **Lisa Burban** will send UFC members an e-mail regarding the June Forest Service review.
- **Bob Brush, Lisa Burban and Matt DuVall** will pursue the issue of UFC involvement in America Leapfrogged conference.
- **Dick Rideout and DNR staff** will conduct an informal evaluation of exhibitors.
- Laura Jull needs **council members** to identify potential candidates for the UF BMP advisory committee on urban invasives.

Minutes

Called to order at 9:50 am

Dick Rideout introduced Laura Wyatt as the new Urban Forestry Council Liaison and Urban Forestry Communications specialist. She is working full time for the DNR as a double LTE. Laura is formerly from northern Illinois. Growing up near Morton Arboretum, she developed a love for trees early on and received a BS from Purdue and MS from UW-Madison in horticulture with an emphasis on woody plants and their insect and disease pests. She spent 13 years with the U. of IL Extension Service in Rockford, IL and 10 years as founding director of the Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden, Rockford. Previous work experience includes Morton Arboretum, Chicago Botanic Garden, Olbrich Gardens and The Bruce Company. She has experience in strategic planning, educational programming (youth and adult), fund development, public relations, community development/urban forestry projects, and landscape construction.

Jeff Gorman moved to approve the minutes of the 2/15/06 council meeting. Mike Michlig seconded. Motion passed.

Dick Rideout presented the financial report including expenses through the 3rd quarter. The TCUSA banquet exceeded budget by approximately \$4,400. This deficient expense is partially recovered through the conference and public relations line items that were part of the program effort. 4th quarter expenses will consist primarily of current meeting expenses and Dick anticipates ending the year in the black. Ken Ottman moved to approve the report. John Gall seconded. Motion passed.

2 Report from the Chair - Bylaw Changes – Dave Liska

The proposed wording for bylaw changes regarding the communications committee under Article VII was reviewed as e-mailed to council members by Dick Rideout. Matt Duvall moved that the changes be approved. Logan Nelson seconded. Discussion followed. John Gall recommended a comma be added after “Urban Forestry Coordinator.” Ken Ottman proposed a friendly amendment to the bylaw changes as follows: *The Communications Committee shall consist of three or more of the council, the State Urban Forestry Coordinator, other public agency staff as approved by the State Urban Forestry Coordinator and ~~representatives of partner groups as approved by a vote of the council.~~ others as appointed by the committee chair.* John Gall presented a motion to accept the bylaw changes as amended. Bob Brush seconded. Motion passed.

3 Committee Reports

Awards-Mike Michlig

Mike Michlig reported the committee is looking for a new member since one current member will be leaving the UFC. There has been no activity since the winter meeting. Mike asked council members to assist in identifying potential award nominees. There is a need to promote the awards and seek state-wide input in securing nominees. Dick Rideout suggested the committee, with support from DNR staff, develop a timeline. Items to include: call for nominations, due date, review process, presentation and promotion. DNR staff will promote the award and call for nominations. All council members are asked to share a call for nominees with their respective organizations.

Communications-Heather Mann

Heather Mann reported the committee would be meeting now that bylaw changes have occurred. Committee members can expect correspondence from the chair. At a previous meeting Heather shared information regarding funds available through the Bureau of Land Management. Heather is not sure these funds will materialize. She continues to look for funding opportunities which can be utilized to advance the cause of urban forestry.

Conference-Dan Traas

Dan Traas will be attending an annual conference evaluation meeting. Dan asked UFC members to forward annual conference program and speaker recommendations to him.

4 Old Business

Billboard bills-Dave Liska/Dick Rideout

Bills AB967 and SB541 have passed and are waiting for the Governor’s signature. The DOT has asked the Governor to veto the bills. The DNR is looking to add their concerns to DOT’s request for a veto and offer to conduct an analysis of impact to natural resources. If the bill is signed the DNR will need to keep an eye on the administrative rules process and how the rules are applied. Concerns stated in the UFC letter to Secretary Hassett can be addressed through administrative rules. Council members are encouraged to contact the Governor as individuals, and encourage partner groups and other interested parties to contact the Governor to express their opinion on a veto. Heather Mann moved the UFC advise Secretary Hassett by letter to advise the Governor to veto the Billboard bills. Seconded by Laura Jull. Motioned passed.

UF Invasive BMPs update-Ken Ottman/Laura Jull

The forestry BMP team has met twice and is moving along with identifying stakeholders and securing a broad palette of partners, identifying issues, and determining the mechanism for making decisions. The focus will be on development of practices for categories of pests, not specific individual pests. BMPs will apply to insect management rules, weed management rules, logging practices, etc. Urban invasives, the

team UFC is responsible for coordinating, is the 3rd of four teams. Significant progress with the urban invasives team is not expected until 2007-2008. Ken suggested we attend meetings to observe the process. Laura Jull asked Fred Clark to notify her of future meetings. Laura asked council members to assist in identifying stakeholders and potential team members for the urban invasives team. Stakeholders include arborists, parks & recreation, DOT, landscape architects, county highway departments, municipalities, invasive plant groups, Extension, Governor's Council on Invasives and others. BMP invasive issue teams will direct the process. DNR staff will draft the BMPs. UFC is not the team/committee, but should steer the committee. Lisa suggested forest service partners, Steven Katovich and/or Katie Armstrong (EAB liaison) from St. Paul, could be involved.

5 DNR Report-Dick Rideout

State Budget

The request for state funding for our urban forestry grant manager position has moved out of Forestry to the Department budget and on to the Natural Resource board. This relatively small request will go to the Department of Administration for the Governor's action. The Governor's budget will not be announced until early Feb. Any initiatives which UFC members would like to see championed can still be presented but must move through legislators from individuals or partner groups. The formal process of the UFC providing recommendations through the DNR has been completed.

Federal Budget

Dick Rideout reviewed an earlier e-mail sent to UFC members. The President's 2007 budget includes 26.8 million, down from 36 million in 2003. The Sustainable Urban Forest Coalition has articulated need/use for 58 million. It is too late for the UFC to request the WDNR support the federal request. Council members can inform and encourage partner groups and constituents to contact their legislators and encourage federal support for urban forestry. The e-mail contains funding recommendations, background, sample letter and list of appropriation committee members. Representative David Obey is the ranking democrat on the House appropriations committee and Senator Kohl is on the Senate appropriations committee. Lisa Burban recognized the work of Alice Ewen Walker, policy chair for SUFC and ED of the Alliance for Community Trees (a national coalition of greening non-profits). She is successfully tracking legislation. UFC and interested individuals can join ACT as a friend. Heather Mann stated the Urban Open Space Foundation is a member. Lisa noted the federal budget continues on a downward trend and the outlook isn't any more favorable.

Storm Response Grants bill-

The bill passed the assembly 98 to 0. Referred to Senate committee but chances of getting on the floor this session is slim. If that doesn't occur it will need to be reintroduced during the next session. There is a chance it will be referred to a Senate committee and quickly moved to the floor for action during the special summer session.

Personnel Status-

Hired Laura Wyatt and Ian Brown. Ian is a master's candidate with Rich Heuer at Steven's Point and will start on May 29th and work with the champion tree program and assessment. SE urban forestry coordinator position has been put on hold. Contracts passed for state employee raises, reduced the available salary fund for the position. The forestry leadership team (including Rick Wojciak) meets next week to prioritize issues and determine how to get positions on board. Rick speculates the DOA may have funds available to assist with bringing this position on line. The leadership team is aware of the UFC support for the position. Heather Mann presented the motion to have the UFC write a letter to Paul DeLong and the Forestry Leadership Team to reemphasize the priority of hiring the Southeast Regional Urban Forestry Coordinator. Laura Jull seconded. Motion passed. Dick will be meeting with the new Regional Forestry Leader; Jeff Weatherly (succeeds Richard Denney). Central office urban forestry is fully staffed. Dick is looking to add ½ LTE to update all championship tree records.

Regional Coordinator's Report-Cindy Casey

Cindy Casey reported work on the Tree Management Institute is progressing. Cindy welcomes input and/or expertise regarding how to best market this program and/or reach out to audiences who traditionally do not attend training opportunities.

Dick Rideout reminded UFC members they are serving on behalf of the state and eligible for meeting expense reimbursement. The state mileage rate has been adjusted to \$0.425 per mile. For additional information and reimbursement forms contact Laura Wyatt.

6 USDA Forest Service Report-Lisa Burban

Lisa Burban reviewed highlights from her handouts. Lisa attended the Community Tree Leadership Forum and participated in several excellent presentations designed for non-profits. Descriptions of the presentations were provided. Any of the programs would be excellent conference workshops. Lisa will secure information regarding speaker fees. Heather Mann knows an excellent program resource for non-profit fund development.

The Forest Service review of the WI program is scheduled for June 7-9. UFC members are invited to participate in the process of examining issues and opportunities facing WI forestry. Lisa will be sending members an e-mail regarding scheduling.

The Metropolitan Tree Improvement Alliance (METRIA) Conference will be held in MN on June 26 through 28. A firewood forum will be held at Morton Arboretum on May 24. This forum is designed to bring together resource people from area states to share successful strategies on getting the message out. Laura Wyatt from the UF staff will be attending. A flyer on Trees Pay Us Back was distributed. Please report any difficulties you experience accessing resource material on line to Lisa Burban, lburban@fs.fed.us.

7 “American Leapfrogged”-Jeff Smoller

Jeff Smoller, Natural Resources Manager with the WDNR, introduced the council to the Multi-State Working Group and “American Leapfrogged?” conference scheduled for June 2007. Jeff invited the council to brainstorm their vision of a successful urban forestry program, identifying components, results, partnerships and etc. The MSWG is developing primary tracts for the 2007 meeting, but if urban forestry issues could be identified and tied to broader issues such as water, urban forestry breakout sessions could be organized. Bob Brush, Lisa Burban and Matt Duvall offered to pursue UFC involvement.

3 Committee report - Nominating /Orientation (out of order)

Jeff Edgar submitted a report to Dave Liska in absentee. Tim Bauknecht will be leaving the UFC at year end, after the September meeting. This will leave one open spot. There are several urban forestry niches which are not fully represented on the UFC.

9 2006 TCUSA Banquet Feedback

Dave Liska led discussion regarding the TCUSA Tree City USA Banquet accompanied by information compiled by Dick Rideout. Dave has received only positive feedback regarding the banquet and the general consensus is that the banquet was an overwhelming success. The former mayor and Park Board president of Waukesha are still talking about the event.

Monona Terrace-Ottman/Rideout

Need better signage for way-finding through the facility. Room rental was \$4400. Room rental is based on a sliding scale impacted by the food and beverage bill. AV services were expensive, but very responsive. We paid for 345 meals/hors d’oeuvres. 280 to 290 meals were actually served. Increased expenses for 2006 included: additional graphic work on program book (previous book lacked graphics and design) logo bags (new), TCUSA display map (previously distributed a GIS generated hand-out). DNR staff time and several miscellaneous items are not included. The large, TC map was a success and many participants had their photo taken next to it. **The TC map should be incorporated into the main stream.**

Invitations- Dick Rideout

There were complications in the production of the invitation. **Reducing the number of people involved in the process would result in fewer complications.** Moving the date of the banquet forward resulted in timing difficulties.

Awards-Casey/Traas

The award process went smoothly due to efficiency; it was a well oiled machine. It was good to have UFC members in the award line to personally “meet and greet” award winners.

Publicity-Heather Mann

Clipping service has been slow this year. It looks like there has been less coverage, but the articles have been larger. **Rick Wojciak suggested photos be available for each award winner at the conclusion of the banquet to be use along with the press release. Logan Nelson stated editors prefer to receive images electronically.** Dave Liska stated the publicity may not be what we would have liked to see, but the event was successful in cultivating urban forestry decision makers, our cliental, and participants left with excellent positive impressions.

Workshops-Matt Duvall

Matt Duvall referred to data gathered from 45 returned evaluations (1/3 of participants). Dick Rideout expressed concern regarding participation. 160 attended the symposium with 133 participating in break-out sessions. At the first TCUSA banquet no workshops were offered. At the 2nd banquet, 3 consecutive workshops were offered. At the 3rd banquet we offered a plenary session with break-out sessions. Initially the educational sessions were designed to help fill time. Over the years UFC members have wanted them to do or offer more. We need to clarify what we want the workshops to accomplish. Matt is comfortable with the format; it worked well. Participants successfully raised issues they were interested in and the experts provided comfort and information as needed. Dan Traas and Laura Jull both observed excellent discussions within sessions. Participants were engaged and involved. Several participants expressed frustration in having too many interesting sessions to choose from. The community of Wescott is still talking about their involvement. The discussion format requires attention to group size so discussion can be effectively managed.

Exhibits-Jeff Gorman

15 of the originally scheduled 17 exhibitors materialized. No written evaluation was performed. **Dick Rideout and DNR staff will follow-up with evaluation.** It was nice having assistance from DNR staff with set-up.

Decorations-Dave Liska

The flowers were terrific. They add piazza! **Floral arrangements for table center pieces should consist of a lower design to allow eye-contact across tables.**

Speakers-Dave Liska

The Governor is a must. **We need to develop an inside “contact” to help float this event to the top of his activity list.** We should begin working now to establish/cultivate an informal relationship within the Governor’s office/staff. Some states have successfully worked with the 1st Lady. Dave Liska thanked Bruce Allison for his excellent presentation. The reading of benchmark recognition took too long. **In the future, the list of communities could be simply read without pauses for groups to stand.** Instead of recognizing just benchmark awards should we recognize 1st time awardees plus those who have received an award since the last banquet? Could names be listed on a screen? Perform a dry run to determine how long the process takes.

Registration-John Gall

Orange vests are not needed. **Need three people behind the table and one person in front meeting and greeting guests.**

Other comments:

-Invitation to elected assembly and senate members.

-Is Madison too far a distance for northern communities to travel. Need to look at who is coming and from where. Also regarding those who are not attending; what are the reasons? Could move to Holiday

Inn in Stevens Point. This might be more difficult for the Governor to attend unless he is on one of his state-wide tours.

-Matt Duvall's notes from workshop sessions could serve as foundation for articles providing additional exposure.

-Invite "featured" National Arbor Day person/representative

-Better publicity of TCUSA (state listing, national ranking) and Tree Line City

-Technical folks came early to participate in sessions; elected officials came later for the banquet

-Annual conference and TCUSA banquet are held too close together. Several individuals stated they could only attend one event and had to choose.

-Amount of work to coordinate the workshops is significant, but those who participated were pleased. We should utilize these successes in marketing the workshop component at the next banquet.

In response to the question, "Should we do this again? Is the return worth the expense?" The general consensus of the UFC: the TCUSA banquet is an impressive event that recognizes accomplishments. The event has many folks talking and has provided an avenue to reach decision makers. Offer once every three years is a positive.

-Bob Brush asked the question, why aren't more cities participating in the TCUSA program?

10 Tour Des Trees UFC Involvement – Ken Ottman/Dick Rideout

The bike tour will be passing through Wisconsin on July 26 through 28. Ken Ottman is looking to secure sponsors for meals and breaks offered along the WI route to off-set riders' expenses which would result in more money going to tree research. Brainstorming on potential sponsors occurred. Ken also asked the UFC to consider sponsoring an event such as a tree planting along the route. Dick Welch is organizing an activity in Superior. We could organize something in Bayfield (Big Top Chautauqua...), Washburn or Hayward. Ken will be contacting UFC members by e-mail for further input.

11 Other Business-

Laura Jull has a new grad student (former LA student) who will be working on issues related to construction damage to trees. He is conducting a literature search to obtain a sense of issues and research needs. If you have any specific issues/research needs please contact Laura.

12 Reschedule September Meeting-

Because of a conflict, the next meeting of the UFC has been rescheduled to Tuesday, September 19, 2006. It will be held in Madison at DATCP. DNR staff will survey UFC members not in attendance regarding availability.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.